



VISION 2040 & Climate Change

VISION 2040, the long-range environmental, growth, economic, and transportation strategy for the four-county central Puget Sound area, contains regionally agreed-upon policy and direction for addressing climate change. VISION 2040 provides guidance for taking significant steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as for planning for various impacts caused by climate change. The central theme of VISION 2040 is expressed with the phrase: *people, prosperity and planet*. In terms of climate change, this theme recognizes that caring for our planet is critical for our personal and economic well-being, both now and for generations to come.



OVERVIEW

Provisions relating to climate change are found throughout VISION 2040, from the Sustainable Environment Framework which provides the context for planning for the region's future, to the *multicounty planning policies* and related implementation actions which provide guidance for regional decision-making and local planning.

A FRAMEWORK FOR A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

VISION 2040 includes a Sustainable Environment Framework, which recognizes environmental conditions and problems in the region, along with the environmental benefits associated with implementing VISION 2040. Harm to the environment, including pollution of our atmosphere, threatens to alter the natural environment and affect human health. The Framework recognizes that climate change will likely challenge the Pacific Northwest with an increased rate of coastal erosion and landslides, resulting in a loss or significant alteration of near-shore habitat. The region's average annual temperatures are already rising, and earlier spring runoffs could result in increasing water shortages, drought conditions, and the risk of forest fires. A warmer climate could also lead to more noxious infestations and damage the local food chain. At the same time, the Framework offers that more sustainable practices can enhance both the natural environment and built environment, creating healthier communities in which to live, work, and play.

THE REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

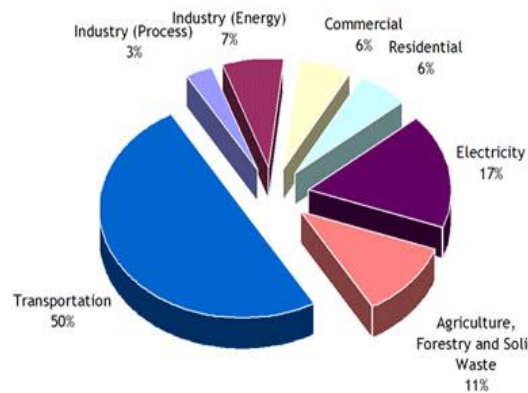
VISION 2040's Regional Growth Strategy seeks to restore and protect the natural environment by curbing urban sprawl, focus growth in a manner that is more efficient and environmentally-friendly, and create communities that are less reliant on transportation modes that produce greenhouse gases. VISION 2040 recognizes that higher density, compact development patterns can be served with more efficient and effective infrastructure and transportation systems that produce less greenhouse gases than low-density development.

CLIMATE CHANGE IN VISION 2040'S GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

Within the Environment policy section of VISION 2040, climate change is recognized as having the potential to affect almost every other issue in the strategy. VISION 2040 calls for the central Puget Sound region to reduce its contributions to greenhouse gas emissions. Agencies at all levels of governments are asked to seek ways to both mitigate and adapt to climate change.

VISION 2040 both recognizes and takes steps to link various climate change initiatives and activities already underway in Washington and the central Puget Sound region. The Governor's Climate Change Challenge is cited, which calls on the state to reduce emissions by 2020, to levels 25 percent below 1990 by 2035, and to 50 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. State legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is also cited (Chapter 80.80.020, Revised Code of Washington). In addition, VISION 2040 notes that many individual local jurisdictions in the four-county region have also taken steps address climate change, including Bremerton, Everett, Seattle, Tacoma, and King County.

Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the Central Puget Sound Region



Source: Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (2000)

Multicounty Planning Policies Addressing Climate Change

Within VISION 2040 there are specific provisions addressing climate change, beginning with a goal that calls for the region to *“reduce its overall production of harmful elements that contribute to climate change.”* A number of multicounty planning policies provide guidance for addressing climate change:

MPP-En-20 Address the central Puget Sound region's contribution to climate change by, at a minimum, committing to comply with state initiatives and directives regarding climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gases. Jurisdictions and agencies should work to include an analysis of climate change impacts when conducting an environmental review process under the State Environmental Policy Act.

MPP-En-21 Reduce the rate of energy use per capita, both in building use and in transportation activities.

MPP-En-22 Pursue the development of energy management technology as part of meeting the region's energy needs.

MPP-En-23 Reduce greenhouse gases by expanding the use of conservation and alternative energy sources and by reducing vehicle miles traveled by increasing alternatives to driving alone.

MPP-En-24 Take positive actions to reduce carbons, such as increasing the number of trees in urban portions of the region.

MPP-En-25 Anticipate and address the impacts of climate change on regional water sources.

Additional Multicounty Planning Policies Relating to Climate Change

Other multicounty policies throughout VISION 2040 also address issues related to climate change.

Environmental Stewardship

MPP-En-3 Maintain and, where possible, improve air and water quality, soils, and natural systems to ensure the health and well-being of people, animals, and plants. Reduce the impacts of transportation on air and water quality, and climate change.

Water Quality

MPP-En-16 Identify and address the impacts of climate change on the region's hydrological systems.

Air Quality

MPP-En-18 Reduce levels for air toxics, fine particulates, and greenhouse gases.

MPP-En-19 Continue efforts to reduce pollutants from transportation activities, including through the use of cleaner fuels and vehicles and increasing alternatives to driving alone, as well as design and land use.

Built Environment and Health

MPP-DP-45 Promote cooperation and coordination among transportation providers, local government, and developers to ensure that joint- and mixed-use developments are designed to promote and improve physical, mental, and social health and reduce the impacts of climate change on the natural and built environments.

Economy - Places

MPP-Ec-15 Ensure that economic development sustains and respects the region's environmental quality.

Sustainable Transportation

MPP-T-5 Foster a less polluting system that reduces the negative effects of transportation infrastructure and operation on the climate and natural environment.

MPP-T-6 Seek the development and implementation of transportation modes and technologies that are energy-efficient and improve system performance.

Public Services

MPP-PS-1 Protect and enhance the environment and public health and safety when providing services and facilities.

Energy

MPP-PS-12 Promote the use of renewable energy resources to meet the region's energy needs.

MPP-PS-13 Reduce the rate of energy consumption through conservation and alternative energy forms to extend the life of existing facilities and infrastructure.



VISION 2040 Implementation Action: Climate Change Action Plan

To ensure implementation of VISION 2040 goals and policies, the strategy includes a set of implementation actions. Regarding climate change, there is an action calling for a regional *Climate Change Action Plan* (En-Action-7). The action plan is to be developed cooperatively with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency and PSRC member organizations, drawing on the expertise of state agencies and other environmental professionals. According to VISION 2040, the action plan should investigate ways to:

(a) address climate change in accordance with the Governor's 2007 Climate Change initiative and state legislation on greenhouse gas emissions reduction (RCW 80.80.020), (b) reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and, (c) take specific mitigation steps to address climate change impacts.

The plan should also address establishing a regional climate change benchmark program. Complementing this action are monitoring provisions in VISION 2040 that call for the region to measure greenhouse gas emissions as information becomes available.

Additional Implementation Actions Relating to Climate Change

Other actions that address climate change include work on air quality to identify steps to improve air quality beyond the minimum standards (En-Action-6) and the development of a sustainable practices toolkit (DP-Action-8). The toolkit is intended to provide information on best practices for green development, and energy-efficient development. Also, the Puget Sound Regional Council will update its programming and project selection criteria to address health impacts and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (T-Action-14). The update of *Destination 2030*, the functional transportation plan for VISION 2040, will also address emission reductions associated with vehicular travel as directed under state legislation adopted in 2008.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Additional information on VISION 2040 and how it addresses climate change is available by contacting the Puget Sound Regional Council's Growth Management Section at 206.464.5815 or e-mail srogers@psrc.org.